

# COMMON SCHOOL ADVOCATE:

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## To subscribers.

This paper has been established for the purpose of promoting Primary Schools in the Southern and Western States. It will be furnished *gratuitously* to all School Teachers, male and female. It can be sent by mail to any part of the country for a very trifling postage.

Among many eminent teachers who will furnish articles for this paper, are EDWARD D. MANSFIELD, Professor of Constitutional Law in Cincinnati College and Inspector of Common Schools; LYMAN HARDING, Professor in Cincinnati College and Principal of the Preparatory Department of that Institution; ALEXANDER McGUFFEY, Professor in Woodward College. It is also expected that Professor Calvin E. Stowe will give the assistance of his pen. Professor Stowe is daily expected from Europe, where he has spent the last year, and will be able to furnish highly interesting information in regard to the systems of instruction in Prussia, Germany, Switzerland, and other parts of the continent.

The paper will take no part in sectarianism or politics, but the leading object of it shall be to show the influence and importance of schools—to interest the leading prominent men in their improvement—to make known and excite to proper action, the indifference and apathy of parents—to show the want and necessity of well-qualified teachers—to point out the defects in the prevailing systems of instruction, and the evils from bad school government—to suggest remedies for these *defects in teaching and government*—to recommend proper school books—to describe the wrong structure and location of school-houses, and to suggest plans for their improvement—to prevail on trustees, inspectors and commissioners of schools to be faithful in the performance of their *whole duties*—and, in a word, to urge, by all proper means, every member of the community to give its earnest co-operation with our Common Schools."

All Letters and Subscriptions should be directed, (*post paid*) to the "COMMON SCHOOL ADVOCATE," CINCINNATI, OHIO.—As the Paper is furnished *free of charge*, the publishers will take no Letters from the Post Office upon which the postage has not been paid. This regulation will be strictly observed in all cases.

In selecting matter for this paper extracts have been freely made from the "Common School Assistant," published in the State of New York, and edited by that untiring friend of common schools, J. O. Taylor. Also, from "The Annals of Education," the "School teachers' Friend" by Dwight. The volumes of the "American Institute of Instruction," and many other valuable works not accessible to most teachers.

## On General Education.

It becomes christian churches and ministers seriously to consider this subject, if they wish to see the principles of pure Christianity reduced to practice, and worldly maxims undermined; and if they would be instrumental in preparing the way for the universal propagation of the Gospel, and the arrival of the predicted millenium. Were it not for the prevalence of the debasing principle of avarice, we should, ere long, have seminaries of all descriptions established among us, for training both the young and the old in knowledge and virtue, and to 'glory and immortality'—we should have our towns and cities cleared of every nuisance—our roads and foot paths improved—our deserts turned into fruitful fields—new towns and villages erected on spacious plans—intelligence speedily and also cheaply conveyed—the physical aspect of the country beautified and adorned—and the whole frame of society transformed and remodelled, in conformity with the principles of reason and religion. Were I to enter into minute calculations on this subject, it might easily be shown, that the wealth at present possessed by civilized nations, were it properly distributed and applied, would be more than sufficient to introduce every improvement in society, physical, moral and intellectual, of which the terrestrial state of man is susceptible—to raise the degraded mass of this world's population to intelligence and virtue—to bring into a state of cultivation almost every waste on the face of the globe—to intersect every country with canal and railroads—and to transform the whole earth into a paradise, scarcely inferior in beauty to that which appeared at the first creation. And those who expended their superfluous wealth in such noble achievements so far from having any of their sensitive enjoyments diminished, would enjoy a happiness both physical and mental, far surpassing any thing which they formerly experienced.

## Common School Library.

The utility of common school libraries, in promoting the best interests of society, is manifest to every man who knows the advantages of acquired knowledge. Those who cannot read, or do not read, must be incompetent judges, of the pleasures and advantages which books afford. Where libraries have been es-

tablished, they promise the happiest effects, in inducing a taste for reading, not only among the children of the schools, but among their parents, and consequently are converting to usefulness, much time which was wont to be spent in indolence, if not in vice. If then these libraries are calculated to benefit the children which have access to them, and to increase the measure of public knowledge, virtue and happiness, why not make their provision mandatory? There are a great many people in the community, who would not, if the matter was left to their option, expend their money in maintaining common schools at all; yet the public good requires it.

We have noticed in our late readings, two instances where men who became distinguished for literary acquirements, dated the commencement for reading, and the acquisition of knowledge, to the accidental perusal of Robinson Crusoe. Cobbett, who wrote more, perhaps, than any man now living, and who is now, on the score of talents, compared to Pitt, by some of the British reviewers, ascribed a like influence to his early perusal of the Tale of the Tub. The predominant passion of youth is curiosity. If we can blend useful knowledge with the gratification of this predominating passion, we bend the twig as the tree should grow—we plant seeds which, like the acorn, may spring up, and spread branches far and wide, to refresh and beautify the land. The nursery and the school are particularly adapted to this species of training. If the habit of reading is postponed to manhood or is only enforced as a task, the mind either does not imbibe a relish for it, or rejects it with disgust. But if the habit is acquired in youth, as it generally will be where opportunity is afforded of acquiring it voluntarily, it becomes a companion in manhood, and a solace in old age. At present the opportunities for reading, to the young, are extremely limited. There are few social libraries, and very few bookstores except in the cities and villages. The meagre supply of other than school books and bibles, which reaches the interior, principally passes through pedlars and chapmen, and are of doubtful character. It certainly becomes the guardians of the public weal, to take these matters under their special cognizance, and to see that the young mind is furnished with food adapted to its capacities, and calculated to promote its health and usefulness.

**Lending Libraries.**

"There are in England and Wales, 2,464 lending libraries"—*Lond. Jour. of Ed.*

These "Lending Libraries," were introduced some years since, principally through the efforts and recommendations of Lord Brougham. The "London School Society," says "they have been productive of the greatest good; they have not only excited and improved the schools, but they have given a taste for reading throughout the community generally." A "Lending Library" is read by the inhabitants of one place and then taken to another neighbourhood, where it is re-read, and then again sent to some other circle of readers. Although this system has the advantage of presenting frequently a new class of books, to the people, I do not think it as good as the system of stationary libraries.—When a district has purchased a library, it will be more disposed to read and preserve the books, from the fact that the individuals paid their money for them. The responsibility too will be local, and in most cases individual; and the people of the district will have a desire to improve and increase what they perceive to be their own property and index of character.

The establishment of Lyceums in some portions of the United States has been very general. We are happy to see that their beneficial influences are spreading rapidly over the West. To acquaint Teachers and others with their character, and hasten their extended usefulness, we subjoin a copy of the Constitution and proceedings of the Medina county Lyceum.

**Proceedings of the Medina County Lyceum.**

Pursuant to previous arrangement a respectable number of gentlemen from various parts of the county convened on the 24th day of February, A. D. 1837, at the village of Medina.

The meeting was called to order by appointing D. S. Pratt, President pro tem, and R. F. Codding, Secretary.

After hearing a statement of the business which had been transacted at a previous meeting, as also the Report of the committees whose business it was to appoint lecturers, the following Preamble and Constitution were reported and adopted.

**CONSTITUTION.**

Convinced that "knowledge is power" and that liberal and free institutions for which

our fathers bled and died can only be perpetuated by the diffusion of knowledge; and that a concentrated effort is more likely to be beneficial than any individual effort can be; and determined, as far as in our power, to banish ignorance, diffuse knowledge, and introduce a general and uniform set of class books and a uniform system of instruction into our schools. We agree to form ourselves into a County Lyceum for the purpose of carrying into effect the aforesaid designs, and agree to be guided and governed by the following rules and regulations.

**Article 1.** This Society shall be called the Medina County Lyceum.

**Art 2**—The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice President, Recording Recreterary, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer, who with two other persons shall constitute the executive committee of the Society. There shall also be committees of vigilance of three persons in each township in the county.

**Art 3**—It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all regular meetings of the Society, preserve order, put all the motions and all the regular business devolving upon such officer.

**Art 4**—It shall be the duty of the Vice President to preside in absence of the President.

**Art 5**—It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary to keep a correct record in a book prepared for that purpose of all the proceedings of the Society.

**Art 6**—The duty of the Corresponding Secretary shall be to conduct the correspondence of the Society, and discharge such other duties as necessarily devolve on such office.

**Art 7**—The Society shall meet semi-annually, to wit, the first Friday of April and the second Friday of September, and as much oftener as the executive committee shall think proper.

**Art 8**—This constitution may be altered or amended by a vote of two thirds of the members present at any regular meeting of the Society.

**Professor Stowe's Lectures.**

PROFESSOR STOWE of Lane Seminary, has recently returned from a tour to Europe, and has commenced a series of lectures, giving the result of his observations. We shall sketch a little of his first lecture.

It is difficult (he said) for a foreigner to appreciate the customs and institutions of a

strange country. English travelers, for instance, have found much fault with the clean neat New England villages. They should be covered with smoke and dust as in England. Nothing can be more rash than the sweeping judgments often passed by foreign travelers. He would only undertake to state what he saw and just as he saw the objects that fell under his observation.

His remarks would be confined chiefly to three topics. 1 Education; 2 Religion; 3 Political Institutions.

In education, Germany has gone far beyond all other countries. It now exhibits a spectacle nowhere else to be seen. Formerly there was much learning and many learned men in Germany, but *Popular Education* is now most prominently seen. Quiet, studious, orderly, frugal Germany—what visitor but must quit this delightful country with reluctance. The states in which popular education has been most cultivated are Prussia, Saxony, Baden, Württemberg, Bavaria, and the free city of Frankfort. In Prussia common schools have been carried to the highest perfection. There is the same theory in all, but in Prussia the system is more rigid and effective.

The great difficulties to be overcome were the rivalries of opposing religious sects, Catholics and Protestants—indifference of the people—and their poverty. The celebrated Francke gave the first impulse. He established a school for primary instruction in Hamburg. He immediately saw the indispensable importance of well qualified teachers. He first established a seminary for teachers at Halle, 1700. The subject expanded in public estimation. At length one of the most powerful monarchs of Europe (the king of Prussia) took hold with an inflexible determination to overcome all obstacles, and he has overcome them. He has established the most effective system of popular education the world has ever seen.

On my arrival at Berlin, my first inquiry was for schools. I visited three. The structure of their school-houses very nearly resembles the public school-houses of Cincinnati.—They are usually two stories high, with four rooms on each floor. Attached to each school house there is a play ground, a garden and shops for the pupils to work, and a place for learning to swim.

The teachers are full of enthusiasm. On their merit as teachers is their sole reliance. When witnessing their zeal, I felt that if I got back to my own country, I would devote my-

self more fervently to my business as a teacher than I had ever done before.

Each teacher has his department of labor definitely assigned. Sometimes he has his room, and the different classes come to him, to receive his instructions, and sometimes he visits the different rooms occupied by the pupils. There is the strictest subordination among the teachers. A head teacher is in each school—he assigns classes, &c., to the under teachers, and teaches some of the higher studies. The compensation of teachers is very small, being to teachers in primary schools, from \$80 to \$200 per annum; and in the highest schools from \$400 to \$600, seldom so high as \$800. But their families are provided for. If a teacher dies, having been engaged as a teacher ten years, his family continue to receive after his death one-third of his salary, if 20 years, two-thirds; if 30 years an amount equal to his salary.

In all the schools, Christianity is taught.—Another specific branch is the art of thinking, another is to teach the knowledge of things, music is also universally taught. The hours of school are from 6 to 9 A. M. and from 3 to 6 P. M., thus taking the best part of the day for study, and leaving the most suitable part for the children to assist their parents.

Their mode of teaching is in many respects peculiar. In every school there is a card or sheet of paper containing a list and the order of studies for every day and hour in the week, so that every pupil knows exactly what he has to do, and exactly when he has to do it. Their method of teaching to read is better adapted to German than to English. The pupil is taught letters, syllables and words at the same time. Take for example, the word *excellent*. First the large printed letter e is placed before the pupil in a rack, which he pronounces, then the letter x, which he also pronounces, then the two letters ex are exhibited together and he is taught to pronounce the syllable ex; and so on through the word.

In teaching the art of penmanship, two objects are aimed at, to write *neatly* and *rapidly*. A copy is put on blackboard before the school. They have their pen and paper. The teacher pronounces 1, and the children all draw the mark deliberately which they see before them. The teacher repeats this with constantly increasing rapidity, and the children proceed with a corresponding increase of speed in writing. There the same process is gone through with, with two strokes of the pen, then write three, then write four, and at last with five.

In grammar, conjugation and declension are taught on the black board. The pupil is required to write for instance, indicative mood present tense, 2nd person singular, of the verb to love, and he writes, *thou lovest*, and so through all the forms. He then is required to make a sentence with the same verb, in the various moods, as affirmatively, interrogative-ly, potentially, &c. &c.

Much attention has been paid to teaching the Bible.—After trying all ways of teaching it they have settled in the fullest conviction that it is best to take the Bible, the whole of it, just as it is, in order to use it as a school book. First they teach the historical parts, second, the preception parts, third the doctrinal parts.

Music is scientifically taught in all their schools. Their musicians are in the habit of using notes on all occasions. Even the trumpeters on military parade have their notes, which they contrive to carry with them.

They teach drawing, not from copies but from real objects. First plain Geometrical figures. Then a block is placed in one corner of the school room of which all make a drawing.

I made particular enquiry with regard to success in these branches. It was the uniform testimony that all can learn music & drawing.

Their discipline is perfect. The first lesson is obedience. If a boy forgets it, he is reminded of it very quickly. Corporal punishment is resorted to but seldom; when used, it is used severely. To be obliged to resort to it often, is considered a mark of an unskillful teacher. Music is made a means of discipline. One of their teachers said to me on one occasion, the devil can't stay where the children are singing; but let them stop singing, and he is among them very quick.

Economy. There is no stinting in providing accommodations, such as school-rooms, furniture, books, &c.: but every thing is used, nothing is wasted. The dress of charity boys is clean and neat.

In Prussia are many poor villages where the people have no possible way of rising above their poverty. From these villages many of the most promising boys are taken and educated at public expense, for teachers.

[At the closing part of the lecture much was said of the order, neatness and frugality of the scholars—of the character and labors of Francke—of his orphan school containing 2017 boys, &c.]—*Bapt. Journal.*

#### Education Abroad.

The Government of Columbia is doing its

best to enlighten the people, by establishing schools in every village, in which their constitution is made a text book, and it contains one important article, "That after the first of January, 1850, none are to be entitled to the right of suffrage, who cannot read.—Ia. Advocate.

#### School Ethics.

—WILLIAM H. M'GUFFEY.

Much has been said, of late, on the subject of moral education. This may be taken as one of the "signs of the times." Hitherto, the object of instruction has been too exclusively the improvement of the understanding, to the neglect of the better quality of the heart.

This reform will be likely to meet with but little opposition in theory, on the part of either parents or teachers; or even of the community at large. But in practice, it is to be feared, it may have to encounter that opposition which is arrayed against every species of innovation without regard to the difference between improvements and those changes which are not improvements.

Teachers may be reluctant to introduce an exercise, that will require them to reduce to a scientific form, that knowledge which has so long been familiar to them, in the character of practical precepts. Their perfect understanding of moral rules, and their high sense of moral obligation, will make them unwilling at the first to the test of speculation, analysis; and make them impatient of that questioning of the second, which must always arise in the free discussion of the class room. Their reasonings will not always be as clear as their convictions; and the consequent failure to impress the minds of their pupils as deeply as their own, with the solemn sanctions of moral law, cannot fail to produce at first, a hesitancy, as to the propriety of a course which seems to be promotive only of scepticism.

But a little perseverance will show, that this is only a deceptive appearance. Practice will soon enable them to succeed in finding adequate expressions for all their ideas; convincing arguments in defence of their doctrines, and a sufficient antidote for that lurking scepticism, which their incipient attempts had not originated, but only developed in the minds of their pupils.

Parents too, through inadvertence, may be found practically to oppose the study of "school ethics," on the ground that it will interfere with that which to them may appear a more important acquisition.

They will probably be found expressing some dissatisfaction with the teacher who employs a part of the day in instructing the boys in such questions as involve the characteristic difference between the faculties of brutes and the mind of man. They might, in some instances, prefer that their sons should devote more time in studying the relations of numbers; and less in the study of those relations of numbers; and less in the study of those relations that exist between them and their school fellows, and out of which grow a great variety of most important duties, strikingly

analogous to those which are, at once, most obligatory and most important in civil society.

But the instructor, who shall, even for a short time, judiciously persevere in imparting to his pupils a knowledge of the principles upon which their "school duties" depend, will most certainly overcome all opposition on the part of every judicious and discerning parent. He will soon be able to demonstrate, that, in this way, more time will be saved from the exercise of harsh discipline, than will be sufficient for an intelligent acquisition of the first principles of ethical philosophy.

Children are governed by *moral* reasons, even when *corporal* punishments are resorted to. The latter can only hold in abeyance the wayward tendencies of youth, until rational motives can be brought to bear upon the understanding and the heart. There would be much less occasion for a resort to corporal inflictions, if moral culture was better understood and more correctly appreciated.

The advantages resulting from an intelligent and practical inculcation of moral principles, even in our primary schools, would be incalculable. I do not here mean instruction given in the principles of ethics, as a science merely; but the application of them to the art of regulating, with propriety, the intercourse of the pupils with their instructors and with each other.

Why could not the *reason* of every requisition be pointed out to the pupils? Why could not the *principle* be stated, when the *law* is promulgated? Why might not the uniform coincidence of duty and interest be clearly exhibited, so as to remove all suspicion of arbitrary control in the exercise of those functions which devolve upon the teacher? Unless this is done there will be a constant competition between privilege and authority; the pupils looking upon every requisition as an infringement of their rights; and the teacher regarding every act, not authorized by the rules, though it may not have been forbidden, as an encroachment upon his prerogative. The boys will try how much they may safely violate the rules and the instructor, how far he may venture to extend their principles beyond their letter; and thus the whole will degenerate into a system of mutual strife and coercion.

Tell a boy, in tones of authority, that he *must*, and *shall* abstain from whispering, for example, and he will be likely to feel some additional motive to continue the practice, from the manner in which the prohibition was expressed. But show him that it is reasonable to grant a request, when properly made: and that it is not only proper, but requisite that you should make such a request and that it would be proper and right that he should be silent in school, even if you had not requested it, *because* whispering disturbs you and annoys his schoolmates, while it is of almost no advantage, nor even gratification to him; and you will rarely have occasion to repeat the argument—especially if you succeed in producing conviction, as you advance with the reasonings above suggested.

But, to take a more general principle; why

cannot children be made to comprehend the difference between coercion and motive?—Tell them, that a cat, or a dog may be governed by fear; but that boys and girls ought to be influenced by principle. Say to them "you cannot convince a mere animal that it has done wrong, so that it will be sorry, and not do so again. But children know the difference between right and wrong; and may, and ought to be persuaded to leave off their bad habits, not so much from fear of punishment, as because they are wrong."

Nothing weighs so much, with an ingenuous youth, as motives drawn from the dignity of his nature; except it be those arising from a sense of duty. He is thus put upon his honor; an appeal which is rarely made in vain. The complaint so generally, and what is worse so justly made against American, and especially against western institutions, on the score of want of discipline, will continue, and increase, until the *consciences* of the young are more systematically and directly appealed to, by those who have the care of their education.

—*Academician.*

#### A Teacher's Influence.

"A teacher of youth, exercises a sway in the empire of mind, as fearful as it is absolute. He may draw forth the young intellect, and give it an impulse by which it shall surmount every obstacle, and hasten its upwards course, or he may suppress the rising aspirations of the child, and render nugatory all his efforts to advance. It rests with him to mould the disposition, to elevate the desires or to crush the hopes; in a word, to fix the destiny of his pupil."

How few perceive the forming, directing, and lasting influence of the common school teachers of a nation! In their hands is the young mind, and by them is moulded and shaped, while the character is formed and fixed for life! "What manner of men" ought these teachers to be? The coming generation will take its character from teachers that parents now employ.

#### School Houses.

We ask our readers to conceive the location, size, structure and condition of the school-houses they may have seen while travelling in this enlightened, affluent country. Are they not usually standing close by the road side, almost into the wheeltrack, where the passing of travellers and carriages divert and distract the mind; and are they not also on the point of some stony hill, unsheltered, and desolate, exposed to all the bleak winds storms of winter, and to the drifting sand and the hot rays of the sun in summer! Others again, are on some refuse piece of land, low,

sunken and surrounded by a muddy pool of water, or a piece of land good for nothing else but to put a school house! Then, are not many close by a public inn, a blacksmith's shop, a cooper's shop and other noisy unfit places!! The house small, dark, smoky and dirty, and perhaps fifty or sixty literally crowded into it. The door off from the hinges windows broken out, roof leaking, desks cut full of holes and ridges, seats rickety and without back pieces, the whole scene presenting a most painful dismal appearance. Who can look upon or remember such school houses, and not desire a better state of things! Do we address a parent who will not take this hint! Who will continue from year to year to send his children to these generators of disease and immorality.

#### Uniformity of School Books.

This is essential to the prosperity of a school. If every scholar has a book different from the others, they cannot be classed; each scholar must have a distinct portion of the teacher's time devoted to himself, in which the other scholars are not interested and will not be benefitted, and the labor of the teacher is increased, while the amount of instruction is greatly diminished. Each member of a class should have the same books and the same system should be followed in the study of each branch taught in the school.—Books should not only be uniform, but their moral tendency should be good. The forming of the character of the child is much influenced by the maxims and principles contained in the reading books of the school. It is worthy of consideration, whether the recommendation of a judicious committee, appointed by a Board of Education, who should examine the books in use and select such as are best adapted to their end, would not go very far to produce a uniformity throughout the state.—*Ia. Advocate.*

#### Arithmetic.

The first precept which I shall enjoin upon you, is, to teach but one thing at a time.—This is a grand point in arithmetic, and in all other branches. Select the principle which you intend to teach the pupil, and apply yourself strictly and exclusively to that, until he is master of it. For as certainly as you endeavour to fix upon his mind two or more things at once, you distract his attention and blend the things together in his mind, so that he does not get a distinct idea of either; and neither of them will be learned well. In teaching any one point, therefore, all others should be kept entirely out of sight, except

those which he already knows. These may be referred to at any time for illustration, or for showing the connexion. Be sure that the pupil is master of the principle before he is allowed to leave it, let it acquire what time it will, unless he becomes weary of it, and his mind gets confused; in which case, leave it entirely, for the present, and take it up afresh at some other time. If the learner is allowed to pass from one point to another, when the first is but partially learned, he soon acquires a habit of learning things imperfectly, which it is very difficult afterwards to break up—It begets habits of inattention, of thinking loosely and carelessly, and not fixing anything in his mind as it should be.—And if the teacher thinks to remedy this evil by constantly calling up those things, which have been poorly learned, he will find himself disappointed; for he will only confirm the habit, instead of curing it.

Almost every instructor succeeds in teaching some things, and almost every one partially fails in some things; that is, there are some things which he does not teach to his own satisfaction. If he will refer to them, he will perceive, that in those things in which he does succeed, his scholars are made thorough as they proceed; and that he is in the habit of seizing the important points, and keeping them distinct, both in his own mind, and in the minds of his pupils. But in those things in which he does not succeed, he lets them pass from step to step, without becoming perfect in any of them, and he is probable endeavouring to make up the deficiency by a constant repetition of the things, which they have so passed. With many teachers, English grammar would be a fair illustration of the latter mode of proceeding. The old method of teaching grammar was very faulty in this respect. The learner was first required to commit the grammar to memory, without understanding it at all, or being expected to understand it. And then he was put to parsing all parts of speech at once. Of the success of that mode many of you, I dare say, are able to judge from experience in learning, if not in teaching it. Many persons still find the subject a difficult one to teach, and the difficulty will generally be found to arise chiefly from the fault I have been speaking of; that is of endeavouring to teach too many things at once.

In arithmetic, this difficulty does not happen exactly in the same way, though in this it is very likely to happen. In grammar, teachers frequently endeavour purposely to teach several things at once; but in arithmetic they do not do it intentionally. They endeavor to

teach only one thing at a time; but they are in too great haste to get along, and they do not make their scholars perfect in one thing before they let them pass to another. Hence there is necessarily a reference to what is past, while what is past is still imperfectly understood, and the scholar is kept in continual confusion.

I repeat, therefore, Teach but one thing at a time, and be sure that that one thing be learned, before another is attempted. If by mistake the scholar is found to have passed some essential point without learning it, he should be put back to it again, and be made to learn it; but on no account should he try to learn it by reference. When such a case has taken place, the scholar will show it, by failing to get his lessons; by getting into difficulties too often, and requiring too many explanations. If it cannot readily be discovered what it is that he has neglected, he should be examined backward, until a place is found, where he meets with no difficulty, and then let him proceed from that. But it is by far the best way, that the scholar should be made thorough as he goes, and it is the only way to be successful. It is also the easiest and most expeditious.

By teaching one thing at a time, I would not be understood to mean, that the scholar should not study different subjects on the same day. It is necessary for most scholars to be attending to several subjects at the same time; for young persons cannot well be made to apply themselves to the same thing long at a time. A change therefore is necessary as a relief to the mind, and a judicious teacher will not keep his pupils upon any one exercise longer than he can keep their attention upon it,

What ever subject you are teaching, keep this precept in view,—to teach only one point of it at once, and apply yourself strictly to that, until the learner is master of it, and then give him another.

#### Overcoming Difficulties.

Be careful, in the selection, to choose the easiest first, and then the next easiest, and so on. And where one thing depends on another, make them follow each other as much as possible in the order of dependence. You cannot always decide by your own judgment, what is the easiest. This must be discovered by trial on the scholars. It will often be found that the thing which one scholar will learn the easiest first, will not be the same for another.

Also, what is easiest with one teacher will not always be so with another. Each teacher should satisfy himself, by experiment what order he succeeds best with, and then pursue it as nearly as he can, varying only when the learner requires it. It is not always necessary to pursue the precise order of the text book. The order of the book should be followed in preference to any other, unless the teacher feels very sure that some other order succeeds better with him.

The learner should never be told directly how to perform any operation in arithmetic. Much less should he have the operation performed for him. I know it is generally much easier for the teacher, when a scholar finds a question a little too difficult, and comes for assistance, either to solve the question for him or tell him directly how to do it. In the old method this generally was done. Not unfrequently, the teacher took the question and solved it at home in the evening, if he could and gave the scholar the solution the next day to copy into his book. Now by this, generally no effect was produced on the scholar, except admiration of the master's skill in ciphering. He himself was none the wiser for it.

If the learner meets with a difficulty, the teacher, instead of telling him directly how to go on, should examine him, and endeavor to discover in what the difficulty consists; and then, if possible, remove it. Perhaps he does not fully understand the question. Then it should be explained to him. Perhaps it depends on some former principle, which he has learned, but does not readily call it to mind. Then he should be put in mind of it. Perhaps it is a little too difficult. Then it should be simplified. This may be done by substituting smaller numbers, or by separating it into parts, and making a distinct question of each of the parts. Suppose the question were this; *If 8 men can do a piece of work in 12 days, how long would it take 15 men to do it?* It might be simplified by putting in smaller numbers thus: *If 2 men can do a piece of work in 3 days, how long would it take 5 men to do it?*

If this should still be found difficult; say: *If 2 men can do a piece of work in 3 days, how long will it take 1 man to do it?* This being answered, say, *If 1 man will do it in 6 days, how long will it take 3 men to do it?* *In what time would 4 men do it?* *In what time would 5 men do it?* By degrees, in some such way as this, lead him to the original question. Some mode of this kind should always be practiced; and by no means should the learner be told

directly how to do it; for then the question is lost to him. For when the question is thus solved for him, he is perfectly satisfied with it and he will give himself no farther trouble about the mode in which it is done.

When the learner begins to require assistance too often, it is an indication that something has not been learned thoroughly. He should then go back to some place, that he does perfectly understand and review.

#### Simplifying.

All illustrations should be given by practical examples having reference to sensible objects. Most people use the reverse of this principle, and think to simplify practical examples by means of abstract ones. For instance, if you propose to a child this simple question: *George had five cents, and his father gave him three more, how many had he then?* I have found that most persons think to simplify such practical examples; by putting them into an abstract form, and saying, *How many are five and three?* But this question is already in the simplest form that it can be.—The only way that it can be made easier, is to put it in smaller numbers. If the child can count, this will hardly be necessary. No explanation more simple than the question itself can be given, and none is required. The reference to sensible objects, and to the action of giving, assists the mind of the child in thinking of it, and suggests immediately what operation he must perform: and he sets himself to calculate it. He has not yet learned what the sum of those two numbers is; he is therefore obliged to calculate it, in order to answer the question; and he will require some little time to do it. Most persons, when such a question is proposed, do not observe the process, going on in the child's mind; but because he does not answer immediately, they think that he does not understand it, and they begin to assist him, as they suppose, and say, *How many are five and three?* Cannot you tell how many five and three are! Now this letter question is very much more difficult for the child, than the original one. Besides the child would not probably perceive any connexion between them. He can very easily understand, and question itself suggests it to him better than any explanation, that the five cents and three cents are to be counted together; but he does not easily perceive what the abstract numbers five and three have to do with it. This is a process of generalization, which it takes children some time to learn.

In all cases, then, especially in the early stages, it will be perplexing, and rather injurious, to refer the learner from a practical to an abstract question, for the purpose of explanation. And it is still worse to tell him the result, and not make him find it himself. If the question is sufficiently simple, he will solve it. And he should be allowed time to do it, and not be perplexed with questions or interruptions until he has done it. But if he does not solve the question, it will be because he does not fully comprehend it. And if cannot be made to comprehend it, the question should be varied, either by varying the numbers, or the objects, or both, until a question is made that he can answer. One being found that he can answer, another should be made a little varied, and then another, and so on, till he is brought back to the one first proposed. It will be better that the question remain unanswered, than that the child be told the answer, or assisted in the operation, any farther than may be necessary to make him fully understand the question.

Some children, when a question is proposed instead of thinking of it, and trying to solve it, will endeavour to guess at the result. This should be checked immediately.

#### The Teacher's Compensation.

The labors of a common school teacher are arduous, difficult, and responsible; and I know of no individual in the community whose services are more necessary or valuable than those rendered by a faithful, well qualified teacher. Those who admit these propositions, (and we think every reflecting man will) agree with us, that labors at once so trying and important should always be *well rewarded*. But are teachers adequately remunerated?—are their wages such as to encourage young men to qualify themselves for teaching?—such as to secure men who will make the profession of teaching honorable, and our schools valuable. We must say *they are not*.

Capable, faithful teachers, do not receive a sufficient compensation. The common school teacher, who is employed for twelve successive months, does not receive more than eleven dollars per month. There are a few who get more than this sum, yet a greater number who receive less. Now the common laborer, who hires himself to the farmer by the month, gets as much as the teacher; and the wages of the mechanic are double the wages of the teacher.

It is a very common practice with young men who teach during the winter, to labor on the farm during the summer; and they make this change because the summer wages of the

farm are more than the wages of the summer school. *There is no employment among the American people (what a reproach to our intelligence and affluence!) which receives less pay than elementary teaching.* Yes, there is no service so menial, no drudgery so degrading, which does not demand as high wages as we are now giving for that which is the life of our liberty, and the guard of our free institutions.

Our leading, intelligent citizens perceive this fact, and they have published it, and done much to make the lamentable truth known and felt by every parent and guardian in this republic. Yet but few, very few, consider it; for even now many honest men think that teachers have an easier life, are better paid, and better treated than any other laboring class in the community. The great majority of the people do not see that they give no extra advantages whatever to those who are giving the nation its education and its character.

A young man cannot afford to expend one cent in making preparation to teach a common school, for his wages as a teacher will be no more than those of a common laborer. All that he pays for knowledge requisite to teach a school, is lost, in a pecuniary point; for if he did not know how to read, his mere muscular effort would demand as high wages as he will be able to get, after spending two or three years, and as many hundred dollars, in qualifying himself to teach.

The little compensation which parents are disposed to give their instructors, offers no inducement to young men to make any preparation for teaching. The consequence is, that a great number of our school-houses are furnished with incompetent teachers. Parents complain loudly of this; but they seldom perceive the cause of the ignorance and inexperience of teachers.

They never reflect upon the necessary expenses which an individual must incur by preparing himself to teach, and upon their own unwillingness to pay an adequate compensation to those who are qualified. Parents cannot reasonably expect excellence and ability, if they are unwilling to award such qualities. If they are disposed to pay teachers no more than they now pay them, they must expect their teachers to have the deficiencies which they now complain of.

#### Necessity of Improving Common Schools.

Not only our civil, but our literary institutions—academies, colleges, and professional seminaries are dependent on common schools. If the children in the common schools acquire a love for letters, a desire for higher improvement; if they in the elementary schools make their studies their delight, and the acquisition and possession of truth their purest

and highest happiness, they will wish to go from the common school to the academy. In this land of facilities, if the primary school has given a right direction, neither parents nor poverty will be able to keep the youth from the highest degrees of literature and science. But if the children in the neglected, repulsive common schools, are made to hate instruction, and all the means of acquiring knowledge; if they, in the first steps of an education, find their studies a task and a punishment, they will not only avoid the common school as much as possible, but regard the academy and college with supreme abhorrence. All the allurements of friends will be useless, and the children will probably pass through life with that degree of ignorance which never wants knowledge. If our common schools were what they should be, they would take care of all the higher institutions. The friends therefore, of these broader, nobler rivers of learning and intellect, should not be unmindful of the springs which create and support. To make academies and colleges flourish, the first step must be taken in the common schools.

Again—it takes more than half of the collegiate course to supply what the elementary schools should, but do not teach, and to correct what they teach erroneously.

Good common school are, also, necessary to sustain lyceums, libraries, and all associations for mutual improvement. There must be considerable intelligence, and a love of knowledge, for these institutions to appeal to, and stand upon. If the elementary schools are good, the people will be prepared to sustain these useful associations; but if otherwise, the community may know enough to desire, but not enough to establish or sustain them.

#### IMPORTANCE OF COMMON SCHOOLS.

If a young man can receive a good common English education—such an education as every common school ought to give—he has the power of making the highest attainments. Self-education, with the assistance of the higher institutions, is the best education; and the self-instructor needs only a sound elementary beginning. If the common schools assisted the people as they should, we might see a greater number of those great self-educated men who rise to honor and bless the human race. The common schools now give nothing to the people to commence with, nothing to build upon.

All the moral movements of the day appeal to a good common school education for success. It is idle to distribute the Bible, if we are not able to read. Teaching us to read—not merely to pronounce words—but to read understandingly and with reflection, is one of the first moral and benevolent du-

ties of christians and philanthropists. Many receive the Bible and tracts, who are not able even to spell the words, and many more whose education has been so limited, or defective, that they are not profited by the words they pronounce; and perhaps, by a little designing assistance, are misled into error and bigotry. We would rejoice to see every man possess and obey the Scriptures; but to distribute the Bible among those who are not able to read it intelligently, is not only making charity useless, but it is giving to ignorance and depravity the opportunity of misusing and despising that enlightened benevolence, which was intended, and might have been made, the greatest of blessings.—There is a work to be done before we give the Bible, upon which much of the legitimate influence of this sacred book is dependent; and this work must be performed in the common schools. Whether the Bible Society shall be a blessing to the destitute, the ignorant and the outcast, or not, depends in a great degree, upon the number and character of the common schools; for, be it remembered, they give to nineteen out of twenty all their ability to read and reflect.

#### Eclectic Readers.

[*The following Criticism has been politely furnished, signed by several Patrons of Education, many of whom are among the most valuable members of the College of Teachers.*]

Our judgment having been requested upon a series of School Books, issued under the name of the Eclectic Series,—we subjoin our opinion upon an examination of the First, Second and Third Readers.

**FIRST READER.**—The author has adapted this work to the removal of the three principal difficulties, which meet a child beginning to read, viz., the difficulty of forming words from letters, of forming sentences from words, and of gathering the meaning of words from the sound alone, without material assistance, as to this particular, from the sight.

The first difficulty, we think has been met, so far the genius of our language will allow, by a skillful selection of such words as retain in their pronunciation, the alphabetic sound of the letters, and all of whose letters are sounded. Thus, the child is, in a great measure, secured from the danger of being ridiculed or scolded for doing what is most natural for him to do,—namely, giving that sound of the letters, in their combined form which he hast just learned to give them singly, in the alphabet. It was, without doubt, practically as well as philosophically correct to employ those words, as far as it could well be done, which enabled the child to use the sounds he has learned, instead of puz-

zling him, prematurely, by a promiscuous use of *all* the sounds of each vowel. We think that a child, using this Reader, will be able with comparative ease, to form letters into words, and acquire a knowledge of their sound, in their various combinations.

The second difficulty is removed, as far perhaps as it can be, by selecting such words as the children themselves employ in forming their own sentences. The words and sentences are short and simple.

The third difficulty is remedied in various ways. Pictures are employed to excite curiosity, and the lessons are fashioned to illustrate the pictures connected with them.—When the child is thus incited to study out the meaning, he will find the sentences very easy,—usually, containing one simple idea, and that idea such as will delight him. The scenes, the sports, the ideas, the language, are all familiar to him, without being chargeable with silliness or vulgarity. In a word we feel warranted to express great approbation of the skilful adaptation of this work to the *real* and *peculiar* difficulties, which a child encounters when first beginning to read.

**THE SECOND READER.**—When this second book is put into the hands of a child, he is supposed to have overcome, to a great extent, his first difficulties. This work, therefore, does not directly contemplate, and make provision for his first obstacles; while it is well adapted to aid him in the advanced stage, which he may have reached by the help of the First Reader. In this work, longer words, and longer sentences are gradually introduced. Having by this time acquired the ability of reading, it is proper that the pupils should use it for purposes of instruction. We observe that, in the Second Reader much important information is interwoven with the texture of sprightly stories, which a child can hardly fail to remember. To facilitate this effect, questions are appended as hints to the teacher, when he examines his scholars concerning the meaning of what they have read. Upon the whole, we think the preparation here, for readers in the second stage of progress, is as happy as that which the previous work presents for beginners.

**THIRD READER.**—When children enter upon this book, they are supposed to be pretty good readers, so far as ready pronunciation, and comprehension of words are concerned. The usual tendency in children at this stage, is to hurry ambitiously forward, to show how fast they can read. Here, then, the author takes occasion to introduce, explain, and enforce the whole routine of “stops and marks.” In the Second Reader, the child was taught to understand the meaning

of sentences; in the Third he is led on to the definition of *words*, and suitable questions are prepared for this purpose. Vulgar habits of pronunciation are noticed and corrected; and every means is seized upon, which may excite attention and thought; promote deliberation and accuracy; and make scholars intelligent and intelligible readers.

But one step more remains for Mr. M'Guffey; which is to give a sufficient number of reading lessons for practice in the various *styles* of prose and verse; to introduce the pupils to the highest kinds of composition; and to exercise them in the principles of intonation. It is presumed that the "Eclectic Fourth Reader," will do this.

We have examined these books with a view to their adaptation to the peculiar wants of schools, and we think them fitted, in a very eminent degree, to the *real* wants of scholars in the different stages of their progress in reading.

**E. D. MANSFIELD, Inspector of Common Schools, and Professor of Constitutional law, in Cin. College.—C. E. STOWE, Professor in Lane Seminary.—JOHN W. HOPKINS, Professor in Woodward College.—LYMAN HARDING, ASA DRURY, & DANIEL DRAKE, Professors in Cincinnati College.—BAXTER DICKINSON, & THOMAS J. BIGGS, Professors in Lane Seminary.—HIRAM P. RANDALL, J. G. EVANS, CYRUS DAVENPORT, E. DOLPH & DARIUS DAVENPORT, Principals of Common Schools.—WM. H. M'CRACKEN, Trustee of Common Schools.—M. R. DEMMING, Principal of Classical School.—JOHN BURIT, Pastor of 4th Presb. Chh., and late Editor of the "Standard."—S. N. MANNING, Principal of Beech-Grove Academy.**

#### TO TEACHERS AND PARENTS.

A warm friend of common Schools has said, "Among the duties of the guardians of public education, it is one thing to provide the ways and means in support of the cause, another to obtain competent teachers, and last, to furnish them, as you would the mechanic or the artist, if you would expect the best result from their labors, with proper tools and materials—that is to say, with the *best books*. Money lavished in the purchase of inferior books, is not only lost; but that time, which is the most precious to the young for improvement, is gone, and cannot be redeemed."

The friends of education are requested to examine the "ECLECTIC SERIES." Their *merit* will, doubtless, gain for them a wide circulation, and they are recommended to all Teachers who wish to introduce *good books*.

#### NEW SCHOOL BOOKS,--ECLECTIC SERIES.

Published and for sale at the "Cincinnati School Book Depository," by TRUMAN & SMITH:—Pittsburg, by J. N. Patterson & Co.: Wheeling, by J. Fisher & Son: Louisville, by James Rice Jun'r: Nashville, by W. A. Eichbaum: Lexington, by A. T. Skilman: Natchez, by Pearce and Beanson: New Orleans, by Hotchkiss & Co.: St. Louis, by Turnbull: Cleveland, by Strong & Co.: Dayton, by Barratt & Brown, Columbus, M. Bell.

THE ECLECTIC PRIMER; with pictures, to teach young Children how to Spell and read. By W. H. M'Guffey. In press.

THE ECLECTIC PROGRESSIVE SPELLING BOOK, arranged on a new plan. By A. H. M'Guffey. In press.

THE ECLECTIC FIRST READER; for young children consisting of progressive Lessons in Reading and Spelling in easy words of one and two Syllables. Illustrated with numerous handsome Pictures. By W. H. M'Guffey. Stereotyped.

THE ECLECTIC SECOND READER; consisting of interesting progressive Lessons in Reading and Spelling, intended for the younger Classes in Schools, illustrated with handsome Engravings. By William H. M'Guffey. Stereotyped.

THE ECLECTIC THIRD READER; containing choice Lessons in Prose and Poetry; with plain Rules and Directions for avoiding common errors. By W. H. M'Guffey. Just published.

THE ECLECTIC FOURTH READER; a selection of Exercises in Reading, from standard American and English Authors; with Rules and Directions. By W. H. M'Guffey. In press.

The above Readers are by Wm. H. McGuffey, President of Cincinnati College; late Professor in Miami University, Oxford.

It is believed, that the ECLECTIC READERS are not equaled by any other series in the English language.—Professor Mc'Guffey's experience in teaching, and special attention, in early life, to the department of reading and spelling—his peculiar acquaintance with the wants of the young mind—and his enthusiastic interest in the promotion of *common schools*, render him most admirably qualified for his undertaking. This series of Readers is the result of much labor. In preparing the two first books, he has taken a class of young pupils into his own house, and has taught them spelling and reading for the express purpose of being able to judge with the greatest accuracy of the best method of preparing the Reading Books. The Lessons and Stories which he has adopted in the First and Second Books, are probably the most simple, and yet the most instructive, amusing and beautiful for the young mind that can be found in our language. The Third and Fourth Books, being in regular gradation above the First and Second, are made up of beautiful and chaste selections from prose and poetry: the whole forming a progressive series, (of excellent moral tendency) peculiarly adapted to the purpose of instruction.

THE ECLECTIC ARITHMETIC; or the Principles of Calculation on the analytic and inductive Method of Instruction; with a concise System of Book-keeping; designed for Common Schools and Academies. By Joseph Ray, Professor of Mathematics in the Woodward High School, Cincinnati; late Teacher of Arithmetic in that Institution. In press.

The Eclectic Arithmetic combines mental exercises with the use of the slate, making a very complete system for all practical purposes—being in dollars and cents.

RAY'S LITTLE ARITHMETIC; Prepared expressly for the Eclectic Series. Stereotyped.

Ray's Little Arithmetic consists of tables, Questions and Exercises, to employ the mind and fingers: designed to go before the slate and prepare for it. It is very simple, clear, progressive, and adapted to the capacities of *young children*. Several thousands have been sold in a short time, and it is considered the best intellectual Arithmetic for young beginners ever published.

RAY'S TABLES AND RULES; in Arithmetic, for Children. Prepared expressly for the Eclectic Series. Stereotyped.

A careful examination of these Arithmetics will show that their Author (who is a very successful teacher of arithmetic and mathematics) has prepared them—as all books for school uses ought to be prepared—

from the results of actual experiment and observation in the school room. They are comprehensive, containing twice the usual quantity of matter in works of this class; and by judicious arrangement in printing, are rendered the cheapest books in this department of education.

The Eclectic System of Instruction now predominates in Prussia, Germany, and Switzerland. It is in these countries that the subject of education has been deemed of paramount importance. The art of teaching particularly, has there been most ably and minutely investigated.

[The Eclectic System, "aims at embodying all the valuable principles of previous systems, without adhering slavishly to the dictates of any master, or the views of any party. It rejects the undue predilection for the mere expansion of mind, to the neglect of *positive knowledge and practical application*."

It is often asked, "why have we so many inferior school books, and so few which are really merititious and adapted to the purposes of instruction?"

This question though often asked, may be easily answered. Want of adaptation to their work on the part of the authors, is, undoubtedly, the true cause, to which may be attributed the ill success of many of those who attempt to prepare books for the school room.

Upon the same principle that a mechanic, or any other person, seldom attains success in more than one art—so, also, it must be admitted, that no one man can expect to succeed in preparing books for every department of the school. A man may possess eminent attainments as a scholar, and be very familiar with the sciences but still he may not be apt to teach, nor even successful in preparing one of the most elementary works for primary schools.

Again; A person may be highly successful in the preparation of an *Arithmetic*, and receive the well-merited praise and thanks of a large number of teachers and parents, for his admirable adaptation of principles to the juvenile mind—and yet utterly fail in preparing a *Grammar*, or a work on *Geography*; and for the simple reason, that his powers are not adapted to that particular department.

In preparing the ECLECTIC SERIES, the principle of *division of labor* has been adopted, and the books for the different departments have been assigned to different individuals—to men of a *practical character*, who are extensively known as successful teachers in the branches they have undertaken, and who know the wants of schools from actual experiment and observation in the school room.

The ECLECTIC SERIES will be extended as fast as a due regard to the interests of the books will admit.—It is intended that not a single work will be admitted into the series unless it be considered decidedly better for purposes of instruction, than any other of its kind extant.

It is the determination of the publishers to have the whole series of books handsomely printed on a fair type and good paper—to have them well bound, and to sell them at low prices.

[School Committees and Teachers will be gratuitously supplied with copies of the above books for examination, on application to any of the publishers.

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The "Eclectic Series" was undertaken for the purpose of furnishing to the West and South, a complete, uniform and improved set of School Books commencing with the alphabet. A part of the Series has been issued but a short time. *Thirty thousand* copies have been printed and nearly all sold. The unequalled patronage and approbation which has been bestowed upon the published part of this series is the best evidence of their merit.

Numerous Teachers, School Trustees, and Directors, have resolved on the immediate adoption of these books.